

RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MINUTES OF April 20, 2009 MEETING

Board Members Present: John Rupp, Michael Lewis; Edward Field; William Kennedy; Rochelle Lee; and Thomas Deller.

Also Present: Alfred J. Moscola (General Manager); Lori Caron Silveira (Outside General Counsel); Andrew Prescott (Outside Labor Counsel arrived at 1:45); Henry Kinch; Maureen Neira; Mark Therrien; and Ellen Mandly and other members of RIPTA's senior staff and members of the public whose names are listed on the meeting sign-in sheet.

Agenda Item 1: Approval of the Minutes of March 25, 2009 Meeting

Mr. Rupp called the meeting to order and asked if the Board members had an opportunity to review the minutes of the March 25, 2009 Board of Directors meeting. The members indicated that they had and Mr. Deller made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion; the minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

Agenda Item 2: Election of Officers of the Board of Directors

Mr. Rupp asked for comments on the election of officers. Mr. Deller moved that the current slate of officers be reelected as is with the only change being Mr. Field being inserted in the slate as Treasurer to replace recently deceased Board member John MacDonald. Mr. Kennedy seconded Mr. Deller's motion and the current slate of Board of Director's was unanimously reelected. .

Agenda Item 3: General Manager's Report

Mr. Moscola began his report with a discussion of fuel saying the current price per gallon is \$2.07. Mr. Moscola said he has locked in fuel at this price from April 1, 2009 until June 30, 2009 the end of the fiscal year. The FY 2009 average is \$2.61 which is much lower than the start of the year when the highest price paid was \$4.51 per gallon. He reminded the Board that the budgeted price is \$2.80 and by locking in the price at \$2.07 for April, May and June the yearly average should come out to about \$2.48 per gallon which is below the budgeted amount. Mr. Moscola estimates the lock in will generate savings of about \$800,000 and this combined with the additional half-penny we hope to receive from the underground storage tank fund should help to alleviate RIPTA's \$1.3 million dollar deficit. The General Manager is reviewing pricing to lock in fuel for July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010 and will report back to the Board when he has more

information. He said fuel prices are starting to rise and fuel remains one of his top concerns.

He said a House Finance Committee meeting on the FY 2010 budget is scheduled for Thursday, April 30th at 12:00 p.m. and invited the Board members to attend. Mr. Rupp asked Ellen Mandly to email the Board members with the House Finance meeting information and she said she would.

Mr. Moscola said that in his continuing efforts to raise revenues and reduce costs he implemented a scrap program. Previously RIPTA paid to have scrap removed and we are now selling it directly which has generated \$18,000 in new revenue. Mr. Lewis asked what type of scrap was being sold and Mr. Moscola said mainly brake drums, but any metal bus component.

Next Mr. Moscola introduced Roger Mencarini and Mike McGrane who gave a presentation on clean diesel vehicles versus hybrid vehicles. Mr. Mencarini passed out a document entitled Clean Diesel vs. Hybrid – General Observations Mr. Mencarini discussed each page of the document. He said the vehicles are similar in length and width, low floor capacity and seating configuration, but the major difference is that a diesel electric hybrid draws from two energy sources a clean diesel engine combined with a drive unit and electric energy from batteries on the roof.

Mr. Mencarini said hybrid buses reduce emissions and optimize fuel and improve brake wear through electronic controls and regenerative braking technology and they are bus operator and customer friendly and have lower noise levels. About 40 transit agencies across the country are using hybrid vehicles and RIPTA contacted 5 of these agencies for further information. One of the agencies, WMATA in Washington, DC has 50 hybrids in its fleet of 1,500 and has another 203 hybrids on order. Director Lewis asked if they were ordering additional clean diesel vehicles and Mr. Mencarini said he could find out.

Next Mr. Mencarini discussed Philadelphia's transit agency called SEPTA which has more hybrids than any other agency he spoke to. SEPTA has 142 hybrids in its fleet of 1,400 with 340 more on order and they are very pleased with the performance of the hybrid fleet and plans to order more. He discussed the hybrids at the other agencies and moved onto mechanical performance.

Mr. Mencarini elaborated on page 11 outlining the Mean Distance Between Failures (MDBF) of hybrids which measures the reliability of the bus. Two agencies Mr. Mencarini spoke to reported a 50% increase in MDBF on buses 5 – 7 years old, the oldest vehicles with available data.

Director Lewis asked how many hybrid manufacturers there are and Mr. Moscola named Gillig, Orion, New Flyer, NOVA and NABI and

briefly discussed the various manufacturers. Director Lewis asked if these manufacturers would respond to a RIPTA RFP and the General Manager said it was likely and briefly discussed potential RFP specifications.

Mr. Kennedy asked Mr. Moscola about a Providence Journal article on stimulus funds for hybrid bus purchases and Director Lewis asked the General Manager to clarify the article. Mr. Moscola responded that he wants to purchase 73 buses, 10 hybrid trolleys and 63 35' & 40' hybrid buses and the issues discussed in the Journal article have not affected the intended purchase.

Mr. Mencarini continued his presentation saying the regenerative braking system on hybrids slows the bus down and extends the life of the braking system resulting in substantial cost savings. He said that SEPTA reported fuel savings of 22% and WMARTA reported 12%.

Mr. Moscola interjected that RIPTA anticipates a fuel savings of 1 – 2 miles per gallon. Director Lewis asked how much RIPTA spends yearly on diesel fuel and Ms. Neira said about \$6 million. Director Lewis noted the wide range of 12% - 22% at WMARTA vs. SEPTA and Mr. Moscola said it's due to duty cycle.

Mr. McGrane discussed operating costs saying WMARTA's hybrids cost 6 cents less per mile to run than clean diesel. He said Hybrids are also popular for environmental reasons and elaborated on the emissions and particulate studies. Both hybrids and clean diesels

have a 12 year life expectancy and a 42 person seating capacity, but the hybrid is about 50% quieter. Hybrids cost is approximately \$200,000 more than a clean diesel.

Director Lewis asked about the useful life of the hybrid batter pack and Mr. Moscola replied that previously a \$40,000 battery was expected to last about 6 years but great strides have been made in battery technology and they now last 8 years or more. Director Lewis asked the useful life of a bus and Mr. Moscola said 12–14 years. Mr. Rupp remarked on recent battery research saying the useful life of a battery could soon be greatly extended.

Mr. Field asked the difference between an engine overhaul and a battery replacement, and Mr. Moscola said he would put this information together. Director Lewis commented that everything about the hybrid is appealing, except the initial purchase price and wondered if the General Manager would still recommend hybrids if the capital budget was tight. Mr. Moscola responded that ARRA funds have given us an opportunity to upgrade to hybrids, but he believes the RIPTA fleet should remain a mix of hybrids and clean diesels going forward. Mr. Moscola agreed, but noted that clean diesel engines are also \$30,000 more than traditional buses.

Mr. Mencarini finished by saying that hybrids are initially more expensive to purchase but they are cleaner for the environment, more fuel efficient, 50% quieter and have improved maintenance capability

and he read quotes from other transit agencies supporting hybrid buses. Mr. Mencarini asked for and answered a few questions and then completed his report.

Agenda Item 4: Stimulus Presentation Update

Mark Therrien and Lilly Picchione addressed the Board to give a report on RIPTA's stimulus program. Mr. Rupp noted that the stimulus presentation had been cut short at the previous month's meeting and he apologized. Mr. Rupp asked Ms. Picchione to continue her presentation and she distributed a Stimulus Project Update.

Ms. Picchione said the ARRA Transit Capital Assistance funds for this census area are \$46,900,000 million dollars which will be split among the agencies and the goal is to get half of the funds into an approved grant by FTA by September which means completing the applications by July 1, 2009. She said they started with \$46.9 million in funds and of this \$9.7 million will go to other agencies in our region leaving us with \$37.2 million. It was determined at the last Board meeting that a committee should be formed to address RIDOT's request for \$4.1 million dollars.

Ms. Picchione reported that the Committee met on April 17th and determined that \$4.1 million should be directed to RIDOT's Wickford Junction Station. The Wickford Junction project is budgeted at \$55

million and funding is about \$5 million short. RIDOT anticipates using \$5 million from ARRA funds, including \$4.1 from Transit Capital Assistance. The project budget includes \$9 million in contingency funds and the current thinking is that the project may cost less than the originally anticipated \$55 million. If the project bids come in below \$55 million, or if RIDOT is unable to meet FTA's requirements, RIPTA will receive the funds. Ms. Picchione said the issue is to ensure that the \$4.1 million comes to the State. She stated that RIPTA will be ready with projects should RIDOT be unable to use the funds.

This leaves \$33.1 million in ARRA funds. Ms. Picchione discussed the first round of projects, including hybrid buses purchases and engine retrofits, which need to be put into grants by July 1st and will obligate over half the census area's funds. After the first round of projects \$8.8 million in funds remains for the second round which need to be granted by December 31st. She said the second round of projects includes things such as ITS, Bus Rapid Transit, equipment and furniture for the new paratransit building and bus wash improvements.

Ms. Picchione answered questions about the timing of the grants and when the funds can be spent. Mr. Moscola said the biggest part is the hybrid buses and the actual bus purchases.

Mr. Deller asked how the \$4.1 designated for Wickford Junction would

be reallocated were it to revert back to RIPTA in October and Ms. Picchione said wish list items such as the East Side Tunnel and ITS expenditures were cut to make the \$33.1 million figure and could be added back in, but this will have to be reevaluated in the fall. Mr. Moscola said the bus purchase specifications will go out with options and if we receive additional stimulus funds or reverted funds in October we will be able to amend our manufacturer bus requests. Director Lewis said that flexibility has been built into the stimulus spending plans at RIPTA and RIDOT.

Mr. Rupp asked the process for recognizing opportunities if more money comes to RIPTA. Mr. Moscola said staff would come back to the Board and show the enhancements to the program. Mr. Field suggested that projects be flagged in order of priority and Director Lewis agreed. Mr. Therrien said that it may be a bit early to prioritize, but that it can be done going forward and that staff will report back to the Board monthly with a stimulus update. Mr. Rupp asked that Metro Transit and rail service also be shown in the bigger picture.

Mr. Therrien raised the issue of a stimulus auditing process and the issue of additional auditing as raised by Mr. Field. Mr. Therrien explained that RIPTA is highly audited by FTA, yearly annual audits, the Triennial review for FTA and others. He said one area of concern is using ARRA funds to process certain projects and the management of the projects and this issue needs further review. He suggested hiring a clerk of the works, such as we use for the Paratransit

building construction to assist us in managing projects.

Mr. Field said the audit he advocates is no cost and requires manpower only to look at expenditures to determine if through no fault of our own expenditures were made in error. Mr. Field introduced Mike Truppa a CPA with the firm Profit Search to explain his company's services. Mr. Truppa said his clients include the Cities of Providence and Cranston, Brown & Sharpe Torrey Plastics, RISD and others. Mr. Truppa said his findings from audits are confidential, but generally speaking they are very successful in achieving results on a contingency basis with the clients receiving 75% to 80% of the recovered funds. Mr. Truppa said he and his associates are professionals who know what they are looking for and do not disrupt the work environment. He briefly discussed his methods, typical areas audited and the timing.

Mr. Field said he would like to engage Mr. Truppa with the hope he would find nothing then issue a press release to show how well RIPTA is run. Ms. Lee asked if the audit firm would have to be chosen by bid and Mr. Moscola said it would. Mr. Rupp said that if an RFP is required we will issue one and then said the issue should be discussed further in Finance Committee and Finance Committee can report back to the full Board. Mr. Rupp said this presents an opportunity to develop a more vigorous oversight process internally.

Mr. Kennedy voiced his confidence and support of the RIPTA Board

and staff, particularly the purchasing department. He said the safeguards in place are sufficient and further investigation is not needed. Director Lewis said he does not view this as an investigation, but as a way to capture revenues and expenditures on a contingency basis. Mr. Deller said RIPTA has a tight audit system and additional auditing may not be needed, but in the City of Providence they have looked at a variety of ways to increase revenue and decrease expenditures and sometimes it's helpful to have outside review.

Director Lewis said this issue should be discussed further in the Finance Committee and Mr. Rupp agreed and said he would put it on the agenda. Mr. Moscola said he would put this issue on the May meeting agenda.

Agenda Item 5: Metro Study Update

Mark Therrien and Amy Pettine addressed the Board with a Metropolitan Transit Study update. Ms. Pettine reminded the Board of the overview presented at the February meeting that the Board had asked her to keep them updated. Ms. Pettine passed out a status update fact sheet.

Ms. Pettine gave a recap of the \$500,000 study and the study team lead by the firm of HDR Engineering and said they received local funding and staff support from the City of Providence. This project is

a follow-up to recommendations in the Transit 2020 report. She said the study area includes the cities of Providence, Warwick, Cranston, East Providence, North Providence, Pawtucket, Central Falls and Johnston. The study is about halfway complete.

Ms. Pettine listed the four main goals on the update sheet: reviewing plans and capacity for berthing at Amtrak; Reviewing pass programs and bus berthing at RI Hospital; Working with the City of Providence and Brown University for Thayer Street improvements; and considering outlying hubs in the study area towns and at the Malls.

Ms. Pettine continued discussing transit priority corridors, peripheral hubs, street cars, travel on demand which utilizes the web and GPS and recommended improvements to ITS and stop amenities and road improvements. She has a meeting scheduled with Mayor Cicilline and Tom Deller to discuss these and other aspects of the study.

Ms. Pettine said that ongoing coordination is important and meetings are continuing with the City of Providence, along with monthly RIDOT intermodal meetings and working group stakeholders meetings. She listed key dates and said draft recommendations will be issued in the fall.

Ms. Pettine answered questions on the APTA “dump the pump” event to be held June 18th, trolleys versus streetcars and land for outlying hubs and said she is meeting with Brown University this week to

discuss generating enough ridership to establish a hub. Mr. Rupp asked Ms. Pettine to put together a list of potential hub locations. Ms. Pettine said she would create the list and completed her report.

Agenda Item 6: Amended & Restated RIPTA By-laws

Mr. Rupp moved on to the next agenda item the Amended & Restated RIPTA By-laws. Mr. Field moved that the amended and restated by-laws be accepted as presented and Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion.

Ms. Lee asked a question about the editing process which Ms. Silveira answered. Ms. Lee then asked why the by-laws needed to be amended and Ms. Silveira responded that the current by-laws are ancient and updating is needed. Ms. Lee asked why the section regarding the vehicle maintenance program was added and Ms. Silveira said it was added to acknowledge that the program is authorized and to acknowledge the interagency cooperation. Mr. Field added that the document is a compilation of his and Jack MacDonald's thoughts and edits in an effort to make the document flow more smoothly.

Ms. Silveira answered a few more questions about the amended & restated by-laws and following this Messrs Field and Kennedy reiterated the motion and the Amended and Restated RIPTA By-laws were unanimously approved as presented.

Agenda Item 7: Commuter Rail

Mr. Rupp said an article was written by Bruce Landis and published in the Providence Journal which made it appear that RIDOT was hijacking \$4.1 million dollars of RIPTA's stimulus funds. He clarified the fact that this is taxpayer money devoted to transportation and transit in Rhode Island and the real story that should have been published is how RIPTA and RIDOT are two agencies working together productively and doing a good job of overseeing how the money is spent and how it can benefit the state. He said a quote by Mr. Moscola regarding being disappointed at losing hybrid buses was misconstrued.

Mr. Rupp said that rail service is a necessity for Rhode Island because it is coming as part of overall transit plan and we are currently determining who will run rail service in a coordinate effort with the MBTA in Boston and the rest of transit in Rhode Island. He said it is all a transit function and RIPTA will be the major player, but RIPTA will need to coordinate with RIDOT on how to move people to the rail stations.

Director Lewis commented on the longstanding coordination between RIPTA and RIDOT's planning departments and Statewide planning and this level of coordination needs to continue so the left hand

knows what the right is doing. He said commuter rail already exists in RI and what we are discussing is expansion and how to expand in a coordinated fashion. He said the FTA funds coming to the State are funds for RI and the level of dialog to date reflects that and there has been reasonable deliberations on how best to use the funds with the maximum flexibility.

Mr. Deller commented that he assumed this agenda item would be a presentation by Steve Devine of RIDOT and suggested that Mr. Devine give a commuter rail presentation such as the one given on Metro Transit. Director Lewis supported this suggestion and said he would have one ready for the May Board meeting. Mr. Deller said that it should include a component on how commuter rail ties into bus service. Mr. Rupp stated that RIPTA has the overall transit expertise and needs to be closely involved.

Agenda Item 8: Tiered Fares for Park & Ride Passenger

Ed Field addressed agenda item # 8 saying he advocates continually looking at sources of revenue and feels this may be an area where somebody may be getting an “unfair advantage” so to speak and that different tiers of fare pricing should be considered. This issue was first raised at the December meeting but was tabled at that time and he would like to have a more thorough discussion and further consideration. He said this initiative may not translate in to big dollar savings but it will at least demonstrate to the legislators and the

public that we are continually reviewing our fares. Mr. Field said we should review park & ride parking lot fees and fares.

Mr. Therrien responded that park & rides and fares are two distinct issues. He said a park & ride plan is in the works and will be presented to the Board at the June meeting. He added that many of the park & ride lots are owned privately and others owned by RIDOT and are subject to Federal Highway and FTA restrictions.

He said another project is in the works for presentation to the Board that deals with raising revenues and various zoned fares. Mr. Therrien said that our system configuration poses problems in this area and he will elaborate when he gives the presentation at the June meeting.

Mr. Field wondered if the lots themselves are a problem if we should look at alternate locations and he discussed parking lots he has seen in Savannah, GA which impressively optimize small sized automated lots. Mr. Field then asked if stimulus funds could be used to obtain consultation on this issue. Mr. Therrien said a planning grant is in place, but has not been utilized recently. Mr. Therrien said he would contact Abrams & Cherwony to assist us and he then answered questions about their credentials.

Mr. Rupp commented that this issue needs to be kept in mind when discussing additional funding and long term revenue planning.

Agenda Item 9: RFP 09-16 Park and Ride Chalkstone and Sisson

Roger Mencarini addressed the Board to discuss the procurement for park and ride improvements at the Chalkstone and Sisson Street location. Mr. Mencarini discussed the specifics such as a bus turnaround and parking lot, plus new fencing and drainage and landscaping.

Mr. Deller asked if the plans are similar to those for the recently improved Smith Street location and Mr. Mencarini said similar and this location will be beautiful when complete. Mr. Deller asked about an existing billboard at the site and Mr. Kinch replied that the billboard is grandfathered into this location and cannot be removed for 8 more years.

Mr. Mencarini expounded on additional details in the staff summary and on the recommended vendor Cassisi II of Providence. Mr. Field asked if staff had confidence in the vendor completing the project at the quoted price of \$58,000 and Mr. Mencarini said we did.

Following the discussion, Mr. Deller made a motion that the contract be awarded to Cassisi II as recommended by staff. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 10: RFP 09-20 On-Call Electrical Services

Roger Mencarini discussed the next procurement for on-call electrical services. He gave an overview of the staff summary and said staff recommends the award of a contract for on-call electrical services to Pajun Services of East Providence.

Following a brief discussion Mr. Deller made a motion that the contract be awarded to Pajun Services as recommended by staff. Ms. Lee seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 11: RFP 09-21 Brake Drums

Roger Mencarini discussed the final procurement for brake drums. Mr. Mencarini discussed the staff summary and said that after a competitive bidding process staff recommends the award of a one-year contract with up to four annual renewal options to Truck Solutions of North Smithfield.

Mr. Deller made a motion that the contract be awarded to Truck Solutions as recommended by staff. Mr. Kennedy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 12: RIPTA Management Executive Committee

Mr. Rupp asked Mr. Field to address the issue of a RIPTA Management Executive Committee. Mr. Field said that due to the

Board members busy schedules it may behoove the members to consider an Executive Committee who could be authorized to act for the Board in instances when it is too difficult or inappropriate for the full Board to be assembled.

Ms. Lee wondered if the proposed Executive Committee was permissible under the amended & restated by-laws adopted earlier today. Ms. Silveira stated that committees can make recommendations, but they cannot act. Mr. Rupp said that for instance the committee could meet with Mark Therrien and assist him on something such as the park & ride project prior to it being presented to the Board. Ms. Silveira and Ms. Lee both said such a meeting would be subject to the open meetings act and Mr. Kennedy commented that it would be against the law.

Mr. Field said that often at the monthly Board meeting there is not enough time to fully vet agenda items or implement any long-term planning. He said an alternative may be an offsite weekend conference. Mr. Kennedy said the by-laws allow the Board to call special meetings at any time and he does not feel an Executive Committee is needed.

Mr. Deller said the creation of subcommittees is not uncommon and they are usually tailored to specific areas and have specific duties and responsibilities. He gave the example of the park & rides and said the initial discussion could be held by a planning committee. Mr.

Deller recalled that there have been committees other than Finance and they have been allowed to lapse over the years. He said he is isn't sure if an executive committee is called for but certainly 1 or 2 member committee(s) could be formed to work with staff to frame various issues prior to their presentation to the Board.

Mr. Rupp stated that most Board's have an executive committee which deals with issues at a higher level and he supports the creation of one at RIPTA particularly with the introduction of expanded service, commuter rail, stimulus issues and long-term strategic planning. He added that the once monthly Board meeting does not allow enough time to get the Board educated.

Director Lewis said it appears that state law prohibits the Board members meeting prior to the monthly Board meeting to address certain issues and feels a planning committee might be more appropriate than an executive committee particularly to address strategic planning.

Mr. Moscola said that the committee might provide guidance and permission for him to lock in fuel prices. Mr. Deller said that in his opinion the General Manager already has that authority assuming he stays within budget and Director Lewis added that he could negotiate a deal subject to Board approval. Mr. Moscola said that locking in a price can be time sensitive and Mr. Deller replied that if that happens he could call an emergency meeting and Ed Field supported this

suggestion.

Mr. Deller suggested that the issue of establishing committees of the Board should be put on as an action item at the May meeting. Mr. Kennedy said the duties of each committee should be fully vetted and Mr. Deller agreed. Ms. Silveira added that committee members should be identified.

Agenda Item 13: Ferry Update

Henry Kinch addressed the Board to give a Ferry update. Mr. Kinch disseminated a ferry status document and reported that at the Board's request an RFP had been issued on March 30, 2009. A pre-proposal meeting was held April 14th with three potential operators attending: New England Fast Ferry, Ocean State Shipbuilding and the Bridgeport (Connecticut) Steamship Authority. As the Board directed, the RFP contained two pricing options one which contemplates service with no federal subsidy and one with a state subsidy which they would have to identify. Bidders are required to submit bids on both options.

Mr. Kinch said that during the meeting some bidders stated that they would craft two bids as required, but if selected to operate the service without a subsidy they would decline the bid award.

Mr. Kinch noted that RIPTA received confirmation from RIDOT that if

the service does go forward we would be eligible for the CMAC fund currently in place and some infrastructure expenses.

Mr. Rupp asked that Mr. Kinch compose a brief synopsis for distribution and discussion at the May Board meeting.

Agenda Item 14: Potential General Counsel Position

Chairman Rupp said that the issue of an internal General Counsel came up in discussions at the Governor's Panel and this issue has been on the agenda and been tabled in recent months.

Mr. Rupp believes that a RIPTA General Counsel could handle some legal work currently being done by outside counsel and help to better manage and put parameters on outside counsel cases. He believes a general counsel position could offer real cost savings and be helpful to staff in areas such as RFPs. Mr. Rupp suggested outlining the position requirements and moving forward in the next 3 months.

Mr. Deller said this is an issue that must be evaluated closely because he has been privy to situations where counsel was hired and in the long term resulted in higher legal costs because the attorney did not match he needs, but given the economic times we should study this issue to determine if it makes sense for RIPTA.

Bill Kennedy disagreed saying RIPTA's outside counsel does a good

job and he does not feel the expense of an in-house counsel is justified. Director Lewis said the issue of a General Counsel should be assessed on a cost benefit basis to determine if it is more cost effective to consolidate legal expenditures and added that the intangibles should also be considered.

There was further discussion after which Mr. Field suggested appointing a Committee to discuss the issue further. Mr. Deller suggested it be discussed further in Finance Committee and the other members of the Board supported this suggestion. Mr. Deller added that if after discussion at the Finance Committee meeting it is determined that there is not an efficiency of operations and a reduction of cost then he would be opposed. Mr. Kennedy stated his opposition regardless.

Mr. Rupp asked that this agenda item be put on the Finance Committee agenda.

Agenda Item 15: Public Comment

Chairman Rupp asked for public comment and recognized Steve Farrell, President of ATU. Mr. Farrell said it was reported at a recent Service Review Committee meeting that RIPTA's weekday beach bus service would be eliminated this summer and he asked for the Board's comment.

The General Manager said changes had been made during the January 17th pick as part of overall service modifications to help reduce the budget deficit. He said the beach bus service is one of many modifications approved by the Board to achieve cost savings. He said dedicated beach service remains in place on the weekend and regular bus service to the beach area has been enhanced. He described the enhancements and said he feels service to the area has actually improved.

Mr. Farrell responded that many of the seats on the buses servicing the beach area are occupied by students and others commuting to URI. He said that he has seen over 100 people in Kennedy Plaza waiting for the beach bus. He said that dedicated beach bus service has been in place for over 30 years and the service should be grandfathered. Mr. Kennedy supported Mr. Farrell's request for continued beach bus service.

Mr. Therrien said that the beach bus was eliminated as part of the service modifications implemented in January and said the reduction was approved by the Board. Mr. Therrien said that beach bus service has changed over the years and Mr. Farrell disagreed and asked if the current change made in January is "set in stone".

Mr. Rupp said that if the changes were approved by the Board then any additional changes would also need Board approval. Director Lewis asked for clarification of the changes and Mr. Therrien gave a

brief historical overview of the service and the recent changes. He finished by saying it was the least productive service RIPTA operated and that is why it was modified.

Mr. Farrell interjected that the Board has recently had extensive discussions of Ferry service which is water related and suggested that the Board get creative in finding and establishing funds to support beach service for the summer.

The beach bus issue, the changes to the service and the costs and savings were debated among those present. Following this debate Mr. Deller suggested that if the Chair agrees, staff should make a full presentation of the facts relating to the beach bus issue at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Kennedy said we must consider the enjoyment that the beach brings to the people of Rhode Island and Steve Farrell vehemently supported his comments and said Rhode Islanders are entitled to the service. Mr. Rupp disagreed and said there is no entitlement and the Board's decision was made, but they will revisit the issue.

Agenda Item 16: Executive Session

Mr. Deller moved that RIPTA adjourn to an executive session, as noticed on the agenda, under sections § 42-46-5(a)(2) to discuss litigation matters. Mr. Field seconded the motion. A roll call vote was

taken on the motion to convene to executive session. All members voted to convene the executive session.

Following the Board's return to open session Mr. Deller made a motion to seal the minutes of the Executive Session, and Mr. Field seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 17: Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Deller. Ms. Lee seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Mandly

Recording Secretary